



*Gina S. Nelson, M.D., P.C.*  
*210 Sunnyview Lane, Suite 104*  
*Kalispell, MT 59901*  
*(406) 755-6550*  
*drginanelson.com*

## **Discharge Instructions: Vaginal Delivery**

Congratulations on your new baby !

You should take special care of yourself while you enjoy your new baby.

### Alternate rest and activity

New moms need a mixture of lots of rest and gradually increasing activity. Housekeeping, meal preparation and other chores should be given to others at least for the first couple weeks. You will need to focus on eating, resting, and nursing. After the first week, activity can gradually increase.

### Eat and drink well

New moms, especially when breastfeeding, need excellent nutrition. The need for calories during healing and breastfeeding is even greater than during the end of pregnancy. Three well balanced meals, healthy snacks in-between, and 8 glasses of water a day are mandatory. Prenatal vitamins should be continued during the entire nursing period, and for at least six weeks if you are bottle feeding. Make sure to include enough protein, fruit and vegetables. Do not bother to avoid healthy strongly flavored food such as chocolate or garlic. Baby will get used to them and they will not cause problems.

### Observe pelvic rest

This means to abstain from intercourse, douches, or tampons until about 6 weeks postpartum. This is to let any stitches and the inner lining of the uterus heal fully. Even though you are not having sex, it is important to maintain a mood of affection with your partner.

### Care of the perineum and stitches

Most people have at least a few stitches. They rarely cause any problems. However stitches feel and heal better with a little care. First and foremost is that they should be soaked or thoroughly rinsed in comfortably warm water two or three times per day. This removes old blood and other debris which can contribute to inflammation and infection. Stitches can feel a little stinging and can ache. However, they should

improve progressively in how they feel. Please report any increasing pain or separation of the repair. Ibuprofen or Tylenol is usually adequate pain control.

A special case is stitches for a third or fourth degree tear, which involves the rectum. In this case it is paramount that the stool be kept quite soft. You will be given stool softener and instructions by which you must abide if you are to avoid pain and suffering. Please also use consistent dietary methods to keep stool soft, including fresh or frozen fruits like berries and pitted fruits, as well as leafy greens like spinach. Do not bulk up too much on fiber. If you take in lots of fluid as you should be this can work out. Otherwise it can just make a large stool, which is not the goal. Consider the use of smooth move tea. If you are struggling with keeping a soft stool, please call in to get some help.

#### Precautions

Refrain from driving until you are off narcotics, and you can move well enough to react normally without hesitation, i.e. to be able to slam on the brakes, etc.

#### Report any concerns

In particular, you should always report any fevers, chills, nausea, vomiting, constipation, diarrhea, or heavy vaginal bleeding. A fever is defined as a temperature of greater than or equal to 100.4 degrees Fahrenheit. All households should have a thermometer. I recommend a digital oral variety. Please also call us if you mood is overly dark. The postpartum and postoperative period is very challenging mentally and physically. It is normal to have few random teary spells in the first couple weeks, but not too much beyond that. It is normal to have brief (only brief) feelings of being overwhelmed. If any of your feelings are concerning, please reach out by calling the front office number. We can help.

Most of the time things go very well. However, communication is key. Making this life change as smooth as it should be often takes some doing. We are there for you.

Best regards,  
Gina Nelson and Staff  
Phone 406-755-6550



[drginanelson.com](http://drginanelson.com)